



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOURTH CO-DEFENDANT CONVICTED AFTER METRO'S LARGEST METH INGREDIENT SEIZURE

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a trial jury convicted a final co-defendant in a four-person methamphetamine case today for illegally possessing ephedrine.

Tony A. Gastineau, 42, of Joplin, Mo., was convicted by a trial jury this afternoon for possessing ephedrine between Dec. 30, 2002, and Jan. 28, 2003, knowing that it would be used to manufacture methamphetamine.

The two-day trial began on June 7, 2004. The jury began deliberations this morning and returned its verdict this afternoon to U.S. District Judge Nanette K. Laughrey.

Gastineau is one of several co-defendants that were charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on Feb. 26, 2003, in Kansas City. The other three co-defendants also have been convicted and recently sentenced for their involvement in a methamphetamine conspiracy.

On Oct. 1, 2003, **Michael J. Armstrong**, 50, of Joplin, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute ephedrine, a chemical used in the manufacture of methamphetamine, between Dec. 30, 2002, and Jan. 28, 2003. As a result, **Armstrong** was sentenced to seven years in federal prison without parole.

On June 6, 2003, **David J. Finney**, 26, of Archie, Mo., pleaded guilty to aiding and abetting others in possessing a large amount of ephedrine, knowing the chemical would be used to manufacture methamphetamine. As a result, he was sentenced to six years and three months in federal prison without parole.

On May 8, 2003, **Sara E. Jack**, 22, of Archie, pleaded guilty to the same charge, admitting that she, too, possessed ephedrine, knowing that it would be used to manufacture

methamphetamine. She was sentenced to two years in federal prison without parole.

Finney and **Jack** were originally charged in a criminal complaint filed in federal court on Jan. 29, 2003, in Kansas City, following the area's largest seizure of a meth ingredient.

At the time of their initial arrest, **Finney** and **Jack** were found in possession of the methamphetamine ingredient after law enforcement officers were called to a disturbance at a room at the Belton, Mo., Holiday Inn Express Motel. At that time, law enforcement officers discovered 19 bags and a backpack containing ephedrine in **Finney's** and **Jack's** motel room.

Further searches of **Finney's** and **Jack's** vehicle and residence revealed a plastic tub marked "Albertson's Simply Clean laundry detergent," which also contained ephedrine.

As a result of today's conviction, Graves said, Gastineau may be subject to a maximum sentence of up to 20 years in federal prison without parole, plus a \$250,000 fine. His sentence will be determined according to the United States Sentencing Guidelines. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney W. Brent Powell. It was investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration, City of Belton, Mo., Police Department, Cass County, Mo., Sheriff's Department and the Cass County, Mo., Prosecutor's Office.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow